

## First Missionary Baptist Church of Coquille

1170 W. 11th Street/PO Box 514 ❖ Coquille, OR 97423

(541) 396-2296

February 12, 2024

To: Churches of the Oregon State Association of Missionary Baptist Churches

Dear Fellow Brethren and Camp Enthusiasts:

Since 1983, the First Missionary Baptist Church of Coquille has endeavored to sponsor/host an annual family-style church camp. Over the course of those years, there have been different locations chosen to facilitate this event. During the last few years, we have experienced a dwindling number of volunteers. Even though our camp committee is instrumental in planning and organizing the various aspects of a church camp, we rely on many volunteers to help us bring it to fruition. That is the main reason that we, sadly, are unable to host the annual family-style church camp in the same manner as we have done in the past. Not willing to be deterred, our camp committee has been praying and discussing how to “think outside of the box” for a way to have a modified church camp this summer. Knowing that the volunteers needed for dorm sponsors are lacking, we are considering a different approach. This situation can be alleviated if each church/family attending takes responsibility for monitoring the youth that they bring, whether they are a church member or guest. With that concept in mind, we have had to review the available lodging arrangements at the most recent location we used, Camp Remote. Their lodging is designed with dorm sponsors in mind instead of family lodging. In addition, we were very disappointed at the lack of readiness of the facility when we attended there in 2022. Plus, the governing body for Camp Remote, has imposed additional restrictions and fees that make it more difficult to keep the cost at an affordable level for all campers.

Taking all of these things into consideration, we have decided to try something very different this year, in the hopes that it will prompt renewed momentum and commitments for others to volunteer with us in this ministry. Think of it as sharing the gospel “off the grid”, or, maybe “missionary style” in the great outdoors. Plus, the added benefit of enjoying precious fellowship with other brothers and sisters-in-Christ. The idea is to have church camp attendees gather together in a group camp-out experience. Laverne Park, is a lovely county park just a few miles from the town of Coquille. The Coquille church has reserved a private section of the park near milepost 13, designated for large groups, from **Monday, July 8th to Friday, July 12th**. This area has 22 camping spaces for RVs or tents (with water and electrical hookups), restrooms, showers, covered gazebo, an outdoor cooking space, and a dump station. Cell phone service is spotty in this area, but the Park Host has a landline telephone for emergency situations. Pets are allowed by the park, but need to be under your control at all times. If you have a dog that is prone to incessant barking, please leave them at home. Also, there will be designated area(s) for those who choose to smoke. Kids can enjoy a playground or ride their bikes if you choose to bring them. There is an open field nearby that can be used for other activities. If you have frisbees, or other equipment, feel free to bring it with you. Adults and youth can try their hand at fishing in the Coquille River (*requires a fishing license for anyone 12 years of age and older*) just be sure to bring whatever fishing gear you will need, relax and fellowship under the shade trees, as well as being there to reinforce Christian values and interacting with all of the attending youth.

Church groups will be assigned neighboring spaces, to allow for self-supervision. You will need to be able to set up your own RVs or any tents brought with you. Youth staying in tents will be under the supervision of the church/family group that they are attending with. The Coquille church will not be providing any form of insurance for medical emergencies. All attendees will be responsible for having their own private insurance.

At this location, we will not have the advantage of a full kitchen at our disposal. Three full meals, per day, will not be an option for us. Nor, will we set up a "Snack Shack". Any food that we are able to provide will be basic picnic-style offerings. Things, such as instant oatmeal, fruit, packaged pastries, hamburgers, hot dogs, sandwiches, chips, simple side dishes and cookies/brownies/finger-desserts are being considered for a potential menu. *(Note: Coffee and iced tea will be available. Not sure about milk!)* If necessary, campers may need to bring some of their own food, to supplement what we are able to offer. They will also need to bring any personal snacks and/or beverages, including bottled water. *(Note: No alcoholic beverages will be permitted.)*

For all intents and purposes, the schedule will be flexible. No classrooms or segregated lessons are being planned, but we will have an evening service for singing and preaching, etc. each day. There is a firepit, so it offers us a place for campfire singing, prayer circles and devotionals. If your church group would like to perform a skit, share a devotional, bring specials or provide a craft project (*instructions and all components*), we encourage it and will make time for it.

Basically, this will be a large group of Missionary Baptists having a camping trip together. And, your church can be instrumental in making this a wonderful experience for those who attend. This letter is being sent to not only let you know the considerations we are making, but to request your ideas and feedback. Also, it is imperative that we have a general idea of how many churches/families are interested in this type of setting for planning purposes. Attendee information is necessary to determine meals we will be able to provide, food cost estimates, and for continued planning preparations. We would like to include the attendees in the planning. Our intention is to keep the camper fee at a nominal amount. For any questions, please make your calls in the evening (5:00 pm – 9:00 pm) to either Sis. Dede Clements (541-294-3853) or Bro. Brian Clements (541-217-8778). Text messages are another option for them, but because of their work schedules they may not be able to respond right away.

The Coquille church asks for your continued prayers, as this will be a pioneering event and a definite leap of faith. We appreciate your time in reading this letter and look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,

Mike Chandler, Pastor  
Howard Clements, Senior Camp Director  
First Missionary Baptist Church of Coquille